

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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R 232340Z FEB 76

FM USMISSION USUN NY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5970

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 0667

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SC, FR, SO, EG, SA, ET, FT

SUBJ: LOYADA INCIDENT

1. SOMALI MISSION TELEPHONED AMBASSADOR BENNETT
FEBRUARY 23 TO ADVISE THAT TALKS NOW SCHEDULED TO BE HELD ON
FOLLOW-UP TO LOYADA INCIDENT BETWEEN SOMALIS AND FRENCH IN
CAIRO UNDER EGYPTIAN AUSPICES. SOMALI PERMREP HUSSEN PLANS
TO DEPART NEW YORK FEBRUARY 24 FOR CAIRO TO PARTICIPATE IN
DISCUSSIONS. SOMALIS HERE HAVE FROM BEGINNING BEEN MORE
ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT USE OF CAIRO AS INTERMEDIARY THAN HAS
FRENCH MISSION, AND SOMALIS GIVE IMPRESSION OF EXPECTATION
THAT FRENCH WILL OFFER THEM SOMETHING TO CLOSE OUT FURTHER
TREATMENT OF LOYADA INCIDENT IN SC OR PUBLIC HANDLING.

2. FRENCH PERMREP DE GUIRINGAUD HAS FROM OUTSET BEEN
DESIROUS OF AVOIDING FURTHER FORMAL HANDLING OF INCIDENT;
IN SC. HE HAD EXPLAINED MORE THAN ONCE THAT HIS ORIGINAL
NOTE OF COMPLAINT WAS DESIGNED TO PRE-EMPT THE TERRAIN
AND ENABLE THE FRENCH TO HAVE PRIORITY IN EVENT MATTER
CAME TO OPEN SC DISCUSSION. HE DID MAKE FIRST SPEECH
DURING THE ONE OPEN DISCUSSION OF INCIDENT IN SC MEETING
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FEBRUARY 18. AT THAT TIME HE SHOWED HIMSELF OVER-RIGID
IN TRYING UNSUCCESSFULLY TO RESTRICT SOMALI REP TO NARROW

DISCUSSION OF LOYADA INCIDENT AND PREVENT LATTER FROM TOUCHING ON BROADER ISSUE INVOLVING TFAI. HOWEVER, DE GUIRINGAUD HAS NOT BEEN VERY HAPPY OVER CAIRO'S INVOLVEMENT.

3. DE GUIRINGAUD TOOK BENNETT ASIDE AT DINNER DURING WEEKEND FEBRUARY 20 TO EXPLAIN HIS CONCERN, OFTEN IN SELF-SERVING TERMS. HE REMAINED CONSTANT IN HIS OPPOSITION TO FURTHER SC DISCUSSION AND REPORTED TO BENNETT WITH SATISFACTION THAT HE HAD LONG AND USEFUL TALK WITH SOMALI PERMREP HUSSEN ON FEBRUARY 19. HE SAID HE HAD FOUND HUSSEN ALSO DESIROUS OF AVOIDING SC TREATMENT OF ISSUE. ACCORDING DE GUIRINGAUD, HUSSEN HAD INDICATED FULL WILLINGNESS TO SETTLE MATTER WITH FRENCH, EITHER BILATERALLY OR THROUGH AUSPICES OF CAIRO. DE GUIRINGAUD QUOTED HUSSEN AS SAYING SOMALIS WERE WILLING TO HAVE FRENCH FORCES STAY LONGER IN TFAI BECAUSE THEY DID NOT WANT TO BE LEFT TO HAVE TO FEND ALONE WITH WEIGHT OF ALREADY HEAVY SOVIET PRESENCE.

4. DE GUIRINGAUD WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE PERSONALLY HAD GRAVE DOUBTS OVER GETTING CAIRO INVOLVED IN MATTER. HE CONSIDERED THAT WITH EGYPTIANS IN THE MIDDLE ISSUE WOULD INEVITABLY BECOME COMPLICATED AND INVOLVED WITH ARAB AMBITIONS TO REMOVE WESTERN INFLUENCE FROM RED SEA AND GULF OF ADEN AREA. EGYPTIANS COULD WELL PLAY INTO SOVIET INTERESTS. THIS, ARGUED DE GUIRINGAUD, SHOULD BE OF FIRST-RATE IMPORTANCE TO USG AND ALSO OF IMPORTANCE TO SAUDI ARABIA. HE SUGGESTED THAT USG SHOULD ALERT SAUDIS TO DANGER IN SITUATION SINCE WE WERE THE ONES, AFTER ALL, WITH INFLUENCE AND INTERESTS THERE. DE GUIRINGAUD DID NOT MENTION ETHIOPIA AND ETHIOPIAN INTERESTS IN DJIBOUTI AT ANY TIME DURING CONVERSAATION.

5. DE GUIRINGAUD ASSERTED THAT HIS VIEWS WERE SHARED BY PRESIDENT GISCARD BUT IMPLIED THERE WERE OTHER DIFFERING POINTS OF VIEW WITHIN FRENCH GOVERNMENT.
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